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Ashoka emblem

National Green Corps

Pictures

Young in green action

**Ministry of Environment of Forests
Government of India**

Inner cover page – page 2

Eco-clubs established under the National Green Corps programme spread awareness about “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Text Page 1: Inner Title

National Green Corps
A programme of Eco-clubs

MoEF logo

**Minister of State for Environment & Forests
Government of India
New Delhi – 110 003**

Namo Narain Meena

FOREWORD

National Green Corps (NGC), popularly known as 'a programme of eco-clubs', initiated nation-wide by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), in the year 2001 – 2002, is a unique programme aimed at building a cadre of young green corps working towards environmental conservation for a more secure and sustainable planet. NGC prepares school children to be at the vanguard of a Green Earth movement, which has its beginning in their own, immediate surroundings. Operated through eco-clubs, the programme adopts novel educational approaches, exposes school children to in-depth field experiences, and provides opportunities to convert their ideas into creative action. The programme goes beyond schools, promoting school - society interactions to sensitize the society.

With more than 91,000 eco-clubs functioning across the country (2006 – 2007), covering most of the States and Union Territories, it is one of the largest environmental conservation networks in India.

Today, National Green Corps programme of my Ministry is one of the most successful and far-reaching programmes of action by the school children. However, we cannot ignore the reality that some of our goals have to be strengthened. We need much stronger commitments from the eco-club members and the implementers to make this programme even better and more effective. I, therefore, urge all those who are involved in the eco-club programme to join hands together, **set a course** to invigorate the eco-club movement involving wider section of the society to realize the dreams of environmentally sound and sustainable future.

My best wishes to all those who made National Green Corps, a successful programme

(NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

NATIONAL GREEN CORPS

National Green Corps, popularly known as NGC, is a national programme conceptualized and initiated by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Government of India (GoI). The programme has school children at the vanguard of a campaign to green the Earth. Begun in 2001-02, NGC now has more than 91,000 schools, as many teachers and more than three million students involved in conservation efforts, making it one of the most successful programmes of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

GENESIS AND GROWTH OF THE NATIONAL GREEN CORPS

“Today's children are the global citizens of tomorrow. They influence their families and shape their attitudes, and [thereby](#) the society. So, children, during their formative years (5 to 14), when they are most receptive to messages and information, need to be educated about the environment and the long-term impact of our present actions. This will have a cascading effect on society” - this was the rationale that prompted the Ministry of Environment and Forests, to conceive of an ambitious programme aimed at spreading environmental awareness among school children and involving them in activities related to environmental conservation across the country. **PHOTO 1**

The proposal was placed before a conference of Ministers of Environment and Forests of the State governments and Union Territories held during 29-30 January 2001 at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The Ministers unanimously welcomed the proposal and the State Governments and Union Territories (UT) expressed their eagerness to implement the programme in their respective States and regions. After the proposal was approved, the programme was launched nation-wide in the year 2001-02. Since this programme aims at building a cadre of young green corps to spearhead the conservation movement, it has been named [the](#) National Green Corps or NGC.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of NGC is to provide opportunities for school children to redirect their consciousness and actions to create a more sustainable planet. Through novel educational approaches and experiences, students are taught to go into issues in-depth.

The objectives of the programme are:

- to impart knowledge to school children, through hands-on experience, about their immediate environment, interactions within it and the problems therein.
- to develop requisite skills of observation, experimentation, survey, recording, analysis and reasoning for conserving the environment through various activities.
- to inculcate the proper attitude towards the environment and its conservation through community interactions.
- to sensitize children to issues related to environment and development through field visits and demonstrations.
- to promote logical and independent thinking among children so that they are able to make the right choices in a spirit of scientific inquiry.
- to motivate and stimulate young minds by involving them in action projects related to environmental conservation.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests, along with the State Governments, hopes to

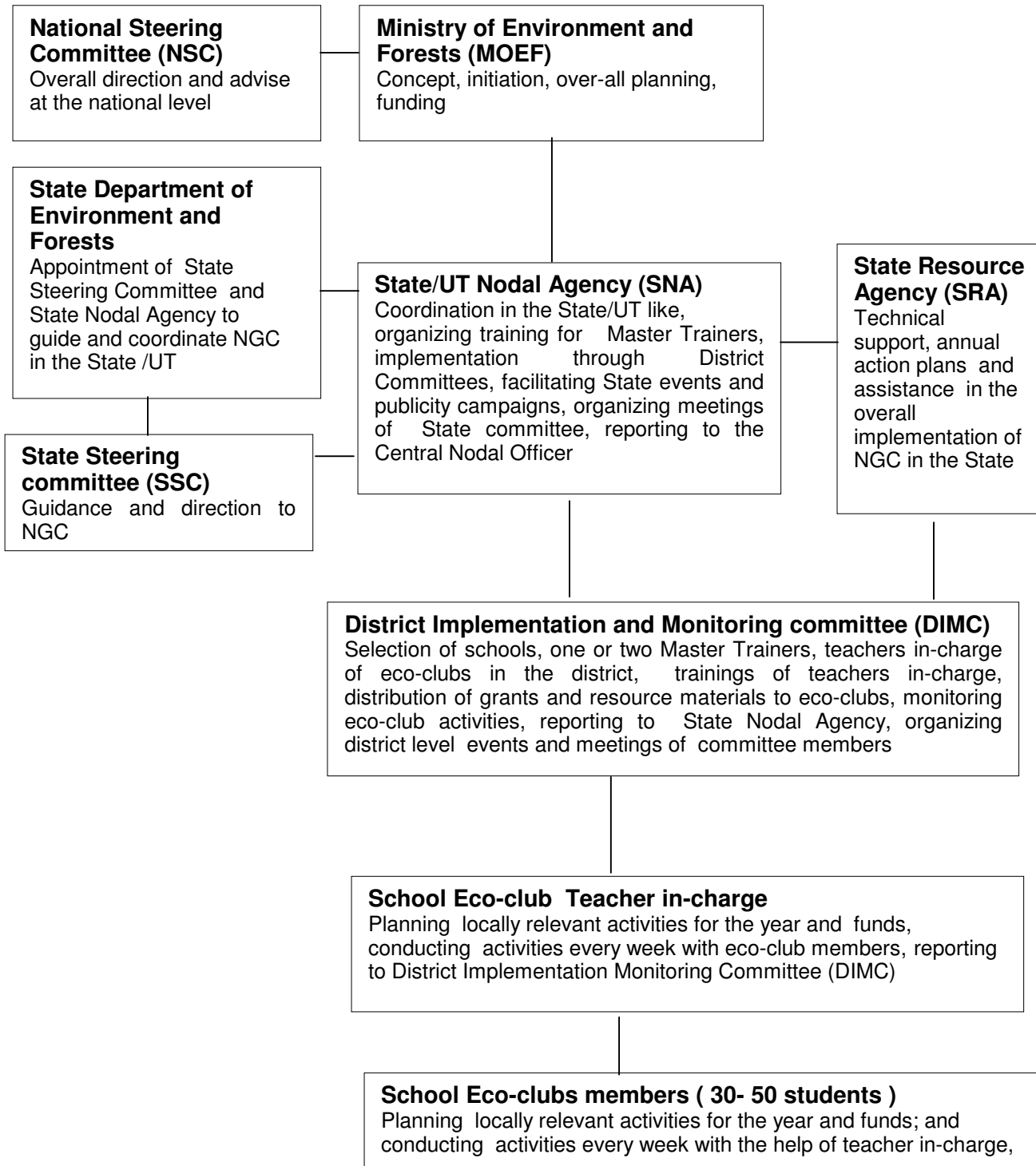
involve the masses across the country in an environment conservation movement by triggering a chain reaction that starts from school children - the 'early adopters' - and moves on to include society and ultimately the decision makers. **PHOTO 2**

HOW NGC WORKS

The eco-club network

The NGC programme works through eco-clubs established in schools across the country. Every recognized school, with classes up to the 12th standard, is eligible to start an eco-club. Each eco-club may enroll 30-50 children, who are interested in environment-related issues. A teacher in-charge, selected from the school, based on her/his interest and involvement in environmental issues, will supervise the activities of the eco-club. A maximum of 250 schools in each district are given financial support under the programme. Each State/Union Territory's Department of Environment and Forests is in charge of overseeing the implementation of the programme on the ground. The Department appoints a State Nodal Agency (SNA), State Steering Committee (SSC), and District Implementation and Monitoring Committee (DIMC) in every district to help implement the programme in the State. **PHOTO 3**

Overall Structure of NGC – that round picture will come. Here the first box on the top will be MoEF and then comes NSC. Can make text bigger and background light



The eco-club network has been established in all the States and Union Territories in the country right from its inception. When it was launched, the programme had aimed to establish 50,000 eco-clubs. Their numbers have, however, exceeded expectation - from 50,000 eco clubs in 2001- 02 to more than 91,000 eco-clubs in 2006 – 2007.

Financial Assistance

The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, gives financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 2500 per annum per eco-club to a maximum of 250 eco-clubs per district through the State Nodal agency. The Nodal Agency releases funds to the District committee (DIMC), which in turn gives the amount allocated for each of the eco-clubs. In addition, each of the eco-clubs receives a kit of resource materials including activity manuals and posters.

The DIMC gets Rs. 25,000/- per annum for meetings, monitoring, and follow up activities. Each Nodal agency receives 5% of the total actual expenditure incurred on eco-clubs and the expenses of the DIMC. All expenditure that is incurred in relation to administration of the programme is admissible. The grant-in-aid to States / UTs is released in two installments. Besides these annual disbursements, funds are released in lump sum or in installments, as the case may be, for training of Master Trainers and eco-club teachers in-charge, procurement or development of locally relevant resource materials and for other approved activities. The State Resource Agency receives a certain percentage of the total annual disbursement for the activities of eco-club in a particular State / UT.

The total financial assistance given to this programme during the financial year 2006-07 by the Ministry of Environment and Forests is around rupees 226 million.

GLIMPSSES OF ECO-CLUB ACTIVITIES

Observing the environment and understanding the interplay of various elements:
Children, who are eco-club members, undertake campus greening activities such as growing and maintaining vegetable gardens, herbal gardens, tree plantations, etc. Eco-clubs also organize seminars, debates, popular talks and competitions on environment-related issues, particularly on environmentally significant days like World Environment Day (June 5) and World Water Day, (March 22) for creating awareness in the school and among the public. **PHOTO 4**

Field visits for first hand experience of environmental issues:

Eco-clubs arrange trips to forests, wetlands, wildlife parks, energy parks and mining areas. They also organize rallies, marches, human chains, street theatre and folk dance performances, and exhibitions in public places to spread awareness among communities on conservation of natural resources, environmental sanitation and personal hygiene. **PHOTO 5**

Interaction with the community and action projects:

Eco-club members come together to construct rain-water harvesting structures and bunds

for soil and water conservation, maintain public places like community parks and heritage sites. They also help to keep their campuses and environs clean through waste management, waste recycling (papers/plastic), making soak pits and vermi-composting.

PHOTO 6

Cultivating research skills and a scientific temper:

Eco-club members are encouraged to undertake activities such as tree and medicinal plant census, and drawing up inventories of water resources and water polluting sources for action by enforcement agencies. These will inculcate in them the skills of observation, experimentation, survey, recording, analysis and reasoning – all of which will help them become serious practitioners of environmental conservation. Such activities also promote logical and independent thinking which will help children to consider debates regarding the environment with a spirit of scientific inquiry before making their choices instead of blindly supporting a cause. **PHOTO 7**

THE IMPACT OF ECO-CLUBS

The NGC's plan, to tap student power to launch a movement for environmental conservation ensuring the sustainable development of our planet, seems to have started off well, with more than 91,000 eco-clubs working towards environmental conservation across the country. In many states like Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the number of eco-clubs have doubled since the movement began six years ago. For a billion strong nation, with diverse cultures and mores, a student movement like the NGC is probably the right kind of programme as the message of sustainable development is passed on from the students to their families and then on to the societies in which they live, having a cascading effect on villages, towns, cities and the nation.

- In several schools and their immediate environs, the change is obvious. The surroundings are clean, as are the toilets. School gardens are well maintained, garbage is recycled or composted or disposed of in an appropriate manner. Trees are planted and cared for zealously.
- Personal hygiene has improved among the students covered by the programme. So has their overall performance at school, it is said. While students show enhanced knowledge and skill levels, the capacity of teachers for classroom transaction has also improved.
- Strong linkages have been built with government departments concerned with environment related issues. Academic institutions, NGOs and world bodies like the UNICEF have got into enduring partnerships for the effective implementation of the NGC programme in the States and UTs. **PHOTOS 8, 9, 10**
 - Eco-club members are very enthusiastic about their participation in the programme and attribute their increased knowledge of environmental issues to association with this programme.
 - Students seem to exhibit a change in their attitude and behaviour as a result of participation and active involvement in the Eco-clubs.
 - Eco club members are sensitized to environmental issues and problems.

- Students participation in local conservation action has increased.
- Students have improved awareness about personal hygiene due to participation in Eco-clubs.

SOME ECO-CLUB SUCCESS STORIES

Several eco-clubs have got due recognition from the Central government and the respective State governments for promoting environmental conservation. For instance,

- An eco-club in Bastar in Chattisgarh has received the '*Sant Gahira Guruji Paryavaran Puraskar*' instituted by the Government of Chattisgarh for their exemplary work in environmental conservation.
- The Teacher in-charge of an eco-club in Gujarat has been awarded the '*Indira Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra Puraskar*' by the Government of India for undertaking large-scale tree plantation and safeguarding them by involving eco-club members and the community. **PHOTO 11**
- In Andhra Pradesh, recognising the potential and capacity of the eco-clubs, the State Forest Department has assigned them the responsibility of collecting survival data of saplings of its massive tree-planting programme.
- Eco-clubs in Madhya Pradesh have become an integral part of the important three-day state event, 'Mogli Utsav', a joint initiative of the State Biodiversity Board, the State Department of Education, the Forest Department and the State Nodal Agency. **PHOTO 12**
- Realising the importance of environmental conservation, members of some eco-clubs in Assam, including the teachers, are each contributing Rs. 5 a month to strengthen the eco-club activities.
- Impressed by the success of the programme, some State governments have decided to extend the programme to all high schools. The Andhra Pradesh government has taken the initiative to fund 10,000 eco clubs on its own.

MORE ACTIVITIES FOR ECO-CLUBS: SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

In addition to existing activities, Eco club members can:

1. Undertake case studies, compile lists of environmentally friendly products and community initiatives which have impacted the environment. **PHOTO 13**
2. Create databases on land use pattern, species diversity, medicinal plants, etc. to help planned conservation efforts.
3. Test soil, water and air quality and their impact on health. **PHOTO 14**
4. Learn to make natural dyes and herbal cosmetics.
5. Volunteer to help or guide visitors in Zoos, Botanical Gardens, National Parks and Public Gardens. **PHOTO 15**
6. Start and maintain a small Orchidarium, seed bank, arboretum, etc. in school
7. Demonstrate / promote eco friendly practices like non-chemical pest management, stall feeding of animals to protect pastureland from over-grazing, use of energy-efficient devices or use of renewable energy for meeting local needs.
8. Do small research projects on species behaviour/ adaptation, traditional practices,

- animal products in fashion industries and so on.
9. Organise fashion shows / exhibitions of products inspired by designs from Mother Nature.
 10. Assess advertisements from the perspective of an environmentalist and indicate steps to be taken against those that convey negative messages.
 11. Observe the rituals connected with various festivals, including local religious festivals, and the impact of certain practices on the environment (such as idol immersion in ponds and tanks, disposing of waste in a manner that is threatening to long-term environmental health, etc). Plan eco friendly alternative rituals that support religious beliefs as well.
 12. Design and exhibit models of an eco-friendly school.

MONITORING AND FOLLOW UP

Monitoring and follow up are quintessential for sustaining the programme and for strengthening it further. Sample reporting format is appended here to help document the information on eco-clubs collected during the programme monitoring.

Contact

| Name and Designation | Address | Phone No. | Fax | Email |
|------------------------------|--|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Shri R. Mehta Adviser | Ministry of Environment and Forests, Paryavaran Bhavan, CGO Complex , Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003 | 011-24362840 | 011-24368654 | rmehta@nic.in |
| Shri R. C. Meena Director | Ministry of Environment and Forests, Paryavaran Bhavan, CGO Complex , Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003 | 011-2436 0783 | 011-2436 0783 | rc.meena@nic.in |

Reporting format for eco-club member schools

(To be submitted half yearly to the District Coordinators by the member school)

National Green Corps

Report for the Half Year Ending: October **box** / March **box**

1. Name of the member school: -----
2. Address of the school with Pin Code:
3. Name and telephone number of Principal/Head of the School:
4. E-mail ID of school / Eco-club:
5. Medium of Instruction:
6. Name of the Teacher in-charge of Eco-club:
7. Number of Orientation programmes the teacher in-charge has attended:
8. Number of eco-club members: Boys ----- Girls -----
9. Kind of resource material received: Posters ----- Manuals ----- Others -----
10. Amount and date of receipt of last grant:
11. Observance of Environmentally Significant Days (It is mandatory for Eco-clubs to observe at least two of such days)

| S. No. | Day | Observed / Not observed (√ / X) |
|--------|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 | World Wetlands Day (2 nd February) | |
| 2 | World Forestry Day (21 st March) | |
| 3 | Earth Day (22 nd April) | |
| 4 | International Biodiversity Day (22 nd May) | |
| 5 | World Environment Day (5 th June) | |
| 6 | World Population Day (11 th July) | |
| 7 | World Ozone Day (16 th September) | |
| 8 | Animal Welfare Day (4 th October) | |
| 9 | National Pollution Prevention Day (2 nd December) | |

Note: Attach at least one photograph of the event.

12. Which of the following activities were undertaken during the half year period (Tick the relevant activity / activities):
 - Campus greening activities such as growing and maintaining vegetable garden, herbal garden, tree plantation.

- Campus cleaning activities like waste management, waste recycling (papers/plastic), making soak pits, vermi-composting
- Construction of water harvesting structures in school and outside like rainwater harvesting structures
- Maintaining public places like community parks, gardens, heritage sites and school gardens.
- Taking a Census of trees, medicinal plants of the region
- Drawing up an inventory of water polluting sources for action by enforcement agencies
- Field visits to environmentally important sites like forests, wetlands, wildlife parks, energy parks and mining areas to get first hand experience through observation.
- Organizing seminars, debates, popular talks, competitions on environmental related issues especially on environmentally significant days for creating awareness in the school and among the public.
- Organizing rallies, marches, human chains, street theatre, folk dance, exhibitions in public places to spread awareness among communities on conservation of natural resources, environmental sanitation and personal hygiene.
- Mobilizing community action against improper garbage disposal, open defecation, tree cutting, polluting water resources and so on.
- Changing light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs / cleaning of tube lights and bulbs of school regularly.

13. Any other information relevant to working of Eco-club: ----

Date:

Signature of Head of the School with Seal

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Preserving our planet for posterity is a mammoth task and no single individual, group, organization or state can make it happen. Micro and macro-level conservation efforts are on throughout the Globe. Yet, degradation continues apace. Mass movements like the NGC are necessary to arrest this trend.

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Photo